Dr. Lambert
with the Compliments of
The Author

A NARRATIVE

OF

REMARKABLE OCCURRENCES,

CONNECTED WITH THE

DEATH OF LOUIS XVI.

LATE KING OF FRANCE.

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH

OF THE

ABBE' EDGEWORTH DE FIRMONT,

LATE VICAR GENERAL OF THE DIOCESE OF PARIS—CONFESSOR IN ORDINARY TO THE PRINCESS ELIZABETH, AND TO LOUIS XVI. IN HIS LAST MOMENTS.

BY STEPHEN CLEVELAND BLYTH.

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PREFACE BY THE TRANSLATOR.

AMONG the phænomena, which the hiſtory of nations preſents to our aſtoniſhment, the French Revolution holds a pre-eminet place.—It was an æra of involution and metamorphoſis—a decompoſition of the whole character of man. We here contemplate a people, once renowned for loyalty, whoſe "ten thouſand ſwords would have leaped from their ſcabbards" to revenge the ſlighteſt inſult on their Kings, riſing in a fever of political madneſs, overturn a throne conſolidated by the veneration of fourteen centuries, ſit in judgment upon their Monarch, and conſign him to death.

Unfortunate Louis! born to the moſt brilliant inheritance in Europe—we ſaw thy morning dawn without a paſſing cloud to obſcure its ſplendor—and we ſaw thy ſun ſet in a ſea of blood!

Still might the Philanthropiſt have rejoiced, if the evil ending here, agreeably to the pious wiſh of the Royal Martyr himſelf in his laſt moments, this ſacrifice, tremendous as it was, could have realized the fine theories of projectors. But alas! the cataſtrophe did honor to the plot, and the death of the Monarch was but a ſingle act in the tragedy of errors and [redacted]. Anarchy reared her ſtandard of crimſon, and at the ſignal France became a vaſt aceldama—a theatre of murder and deſolation. Liberty, allured for a moment by the ſyren invitations of a people, who had promiſed her ſeats of endleſs repoſe, juſt caſt her

eyes upon this ſcene of horrors, retired in ſadneſs and was ſeen no more.

The Author of the following detail, M. Edgeworth de Firmont, was a native of Ireland. His family having been converted to the Roman Catholic faith, emigrated to France. In early life young Edgeworth diſplayed ſuch piety and talents, as prompted his friends to educate him for holy orders. He roſe to diſtinction in the church—and became confeſſor to her Royal Highneſs the Princeſs Elizabeth.

After the important ſervices which he rendered to the fallen Monarch in his laſt hours, his life was in continual danger, till he effected his eſcape from France.—He went firſt to England, and afterwards joined Louis XVIII. at Mittau.—His Royal Maſter introduced him to the Emperor of Ruſſia, who honored him with the croſs of St. Lazarus and a handſome penſion.

In this retreat, he devoted himſelf aſſiduouſly to his miniſterial functions and to works of charity, till his zeal inciting him to attend the French priſoners, who had been attacked with a deadly epidemical diſorder, he fell himfelf a victim to the contagion and died at Mittau, May 22, 1807, at the age of 62 years;—deeply regretted for his eminent and amiable virtues by all who knew him.

Louis XVIII. honored his memory with an elegant Latin epitaph, and the Abbé de Bouvens delivered in London, an eloquent funeral ſermon on the occaſion of his death.

The following relation did not appear in print during the life time of the Author, from (probably) a generous diſinclination to open afreſh the wounds of the Royal family of France.—Since his death, the manuſcripts have been tranſmitted to Canada, and have been lately arranged and com-

mitted to the preſs by Mr. James Viger.—The zeal and induſtry with which he has performed his editorial taſk, are entitled to diſtinguiſhed praiſe.

The tranſlation claims no merit but that of fidelity to the original.—It was written to ſerve no great purpoſes of ambition—but is the fruit of a few leiſure hours, conſecrated to cheer the gloom of a hopeleſs malady, and to enliven the ſolitude of a country reſidence.

S. C. B.

Boucherville, April 27, 1812.

A

NARRATIVE

OF THE

DEATH OF LOUIS XVI.

THE fate of the King was yet in ſuſpenſe, when M. De Maleſherbes*, to whom I had not the honor to be known, not being able to ſee me at his own houſe, nor to come to mine; ſolicited a meeting at a third place. We accordingly met at the houſe of Madame De Sénozan. There M. De Maleſherbes delivered me a meſſage from the King, in which this unfortunate Monarch requeſted me to aſſiſt him at the hour of death, if the atrocity of his ſubjects ſhould prepare for him ſo melancholy a cataſtrophe. This meſſage was conceived in terms which I ſhould feel it a duty to ſuppreſs in this relation, did they not pourtray in the moſt natural manner the amiable diſpoſition of this Prince, whoſe laſt moments are the ſubject of my narrative. The delicacy of his requeſt went ſo far as to denominate a *ſpecial fa-*

* See Note A.

vor the ſervice which he aſked at my hands. He implored it *as the laſt pledge of my attachment to him, and hoped that I would not refuſe it*—adding *that it would be only in caſe that my courage were not equal to the taſk, that he would permit me to ſubſtitute another Eccleſiaſtic in my place, whom at the ſame time he deſired to leave to my choice.*

Such a meſſage would have been without doubt a very preſſing invitation to any other perſon, but to me it was an abſolute command; and I begged M. De Maleſherbes to convey to the Prince, ſhould he have an opportunity, the ſentiments which were ſuggeſted at this moment by a ſympathiſing mind, and a heart wrung with anguiſh.

Some days having elapſed and hearing nothing further, I indulged a hope of a deportation, or at leaſt a reſpite—when on the 20th of January, 1793, at four o'clock in the afternoon, a ſtranger came to my houſe, and delivered me a note from the Proviſional Executive Council, conceived in theſe terms—"The Executive Council having an affair of the higheſt importance to communicate to Citizen Edgeworth de Firmont, beg⁸ his attendance, without loſing a moment, at their place of ſeſſion." The meſſenger added that he had orders to accompany me, and that a carriage was waiting for me in the ſtreet. I accordingly went down and ſet off with him.

Having arrived at the Thuilleries* where the Council was ſitting, I found all the Miniſters aſſembled and conſternation painted on their countenances. As ſoon as I appeared, they roſe and came round me with a ſort of impatience. The Miniſter of Juſtice† breaking ſilence, addreſſ-

* See Note B.

† His name was Garat.——Note by the Editor.

ed me thus—"Are you citizen Edgeworth de Firmont?" I anſwered "yes."—"Louis Capet (continued the Miniſter) having acquainted us with his deſire to have you near him in his laſt moments, we have ſent for you to learn whether you conſent to render him the ſervice which he requeſts of you." I replied "ſince the King teſtifies this deſire and deſignates me by name, it becomes my duty to comply with his wiſhes." "In that caſe (added the Miniſter) you will accompany me to the Temple*, where I am going immediately."

He then took up a bundle of papers, which lay upon the deſk, conferred for a moment in whiſpers with the other Miniſters, and going out, roughly ordered me to follow him. An eſcort of horſe-guards, waited for us at the door, together with the Miniſter's carriage; into which I got, and he after me. I was in a lay habit, as were at this time all the catholic Clergy of Paris. But reflecting on what I owed on the one hand to the King, who was not accuſtomed to ſee a Prieſt dreſſed in this manner, and on the other to the cauſe of religion itſelf, which was about to receive for the firſt time a ſort of homage from the new Government, I thought it became me on this occaſion to reaſſume the exterior marks of my profeſſion: at leaſt it appeared to be my duty to make the attempt. I accordingly mentioned it to the Miniſter before we left the Thuilleries: but he rejected my propoſal in terms which did not ſuffer me to inſiſt upon it, without adding, however, any thing of an offenſive nature.

Our ride from the Thuilleries to the Temple was performed in the moſt melancholy ſilence. Two or three times,

* See Note C.

however, the Miniſter attempted to ſpeak. "Great God! (ſaid he, after having lifted up the glaſſes of the coach) with what a frightful commiſſion am I charged! What a man! (added he, in ſpeaking of the King) What reſignation! What courage! No—Nature alone cannot beſtow ſuch ſtrength of mind. There is ſomething more than human in it." This avowal preſented me a favorable opportunity of entering into converſation with him, and of telling him ſome alarming truths. I heſitated a moment upon the part which I ought to take. But reflecting that my firſt duty being to procure for the King the conſolations of religion, which he ſolicited ſo earneſtly, and alſo, that a miſcellaneous converſation, as it ought to be, might prevent me from fulfilling this duty, I kept the ſtricteſt ſilence. The Miniſter appeared to comprehend every thing which this ſilence ſuggeſted, and he ſaid no more during the remainder of our journey.

We arrived in this manner at the Temple, without having ſcarcely exchanged a word. The firſt gate was immediately opened to us, but having come to the building which ſeparates the court from the garden, we were ſtopped. It was, I believe, the place of a general counterſign, and to paſs beyond it it was neceſſary that the Commiſſaries of the Tower ſhould come and recognize ſtrangers, and to learn their buſineſs. The Miniſter himſelf ſeemed to me to owe obedience to this formality. We waited for the commiſſaries nearly a quarter of an hour, and without ſpeaking. At length they appeared. One of them was a young man 17 or 18 years old. They ſaluted the Miniſter with an air of acquaintance. He explained to them in a few words who I was and the object of my miſſion. They made me a ſign

to follow them, and we croſſed altogether the garden which leads to the Tower.

Here the ſcene became frightful beyond expreſſion! The door of the Tower, although very ſmall and low, was opened with a horrible noiſe, having about it innumerable bolts and iron bars. We traverſed the hall full of guards, into another hall ſtill larger, and which from its form I conjectured to have formerly been a chapel. The commiſſaries of the Commune charged with the care of the King, were aſſembled. I did not perceive, by a great deal, ſo much conſternation and embarraſſment upon their countenances as had ſo aſtoniſhed me among the Miniſters. Their indifference announced hardened ſouls, which the ſight of the moſt enormous of crimes would not alarm. They were about twelve, and moſt of them in the Jacobin dreſs. I owe it, nevertheleſs, to truth to acknowledge that this portrait did not ſuit them all, and that among the number I imagined I could diſcern ſome, whom weakneſs alone had conducted to this place of horror. Nevertheleſs, the Miniſter took them indiſcriminately to a corner of the hall, and in a low voice read to them the papers which he had brought from the Thuilleries. This ended, he rudely turned about and bad me follow him. The Council oppoſed it with ſome ſigns of emotion. They got together a ſecond time in a corner of the hall, deliberating a while and ſpeaking in whiſpers. The reſult of this conſultation was, that half of the Council ſhould accompany the Miniſter who went up to the King, while the reſt remained below to guard me.

When they had ſeparated, and the doors of the hall were ſcrupulouſly cloſed, the eldeſt of the commiſſaries approached me with a polite but embarraſſed air. He reminded me

of the *terrible reſponſibility which hung over my head, aſking a thouſand pardons for the liberty which he was obliged to take*, &c. It was eaſy to comprehend that the object of this preamble was to ſearch my pockets—but I anticipated this by telling him that the deputation of M. De Maleſherbes not having exempted him from this formality, I did not flatter myſelf in coming to the Temple that there would be an exception in my favor. I added, that I had nothing ſuſpicious about me as I was ready to convince him. In ſpite of this declaration, I was nevertheleſs ſearched very rigoroufly. My ſnuff-box was opened and the ſnuff examined. A little ſteel pencil which happened accidentally to be in my pocket, was ſcrupulouſly examined leſt it might conceal a dagger. With regard to the papers which I had about me, they paid no attention to them. Finding at length all in order, they repeated their apologies for this meaſure, and invited me to be ſeated. But I had hardly taken an eaſy chair, before two of the commiſſaries who had gone up to the King's apartment, came down to inform me that I was at liberty to ſee him. They conducted me by a winding ſtair-caſe, and ſo narrow that two perſons could hardly paſs each other. At certain diſtances this ſtair-caſe was divided by barriers, and at each barrier there ſtood a centinel on duty. Theſe fellows were true *ſans-culottes*, almoſt always drunk; and the frightful cries which they uttered, echoed by the arches of the Temple, were truly terrifying.

Having arrived at the King's apartment, of which all the doors were open, I perceived the Prince in the midſt of a group of eight or ten perſons. It was the Miniſter of Juſtice, accompanied by ſome members of the Commune, who

came to read to him the fatal decree,* which was to ſeal his deſtiny on the morrow. He ſtood among them calm, tranquil, and even polite; nor was there a ſingle one of thoſe who ſurrounded him, who exhibited ſo compoſed an air as the King himſelf.

As ſoon as I appeared, he made theſe perſons a ſignal with his hand to retire, which they obeyed without ſaying a word. He himſelf ſhut the door after them, and I remained alone with him in the chamber.

Till this moment I had been able to control the different emotions which agitated my ſoul. But at the ſight of this Prince, heretofore ſo great and now ſo wretched, I was no longer maſter of myſelf. I wept in ſpite of myſelf and fell at his feet, without being able to articulate any language but that of grief. This ſpectacle affected him a thouſand times more than the decree which had juſt been announced to him.—He could do no more at firſt but ſhed tear for tear. But ſoon reſuming all his courage, he thus addreſſed me—"Pardon, ſir, pardon me a moment of weakneſs, if it can even be ſo called. It is a long time that I have lived in the midſt of my enemies, and habit has in ſome degree familiariſed me with them. But the ſight of a faithful ſubject ſpeaks another language to my heart. It is a ſpectacle to which my eyes are no longer accuſtomed and touches me ſenſibly in ſpite of my efforts."—In ſaying theſe words, he with great goodneſs raiſed me up, and made me paſs with him into his cloſet, that we might diſcourſe more at our eaſe, for every thing was heard from the chamber. This cloſet was made in one of the turrets of the temple.—It was without tapeſtry or any other ornament. A miſerable

* See Note B.

earthen ſtove ſupplied the place of a chimney, and the whole furniture conſiſted of a table and three leather-bottomed chairs.

He bad me ſit down beſide him, and ſaid—"It is now, ſir, the one thing needful which alone occupies my mind.—Alas! the only important buſineſs which remains to be performed! And what is all elſe in compariſon with this!—But I muſt beg of you a little time for recollection, for my family is now coming down. In the mean time, here is a writing which I am happy to communicate to you."—After expreſſing himſelf in this manner, he drew out of his pocket a ſealed paper and opened it by breaking the ſeals. It was his Will,* which he had made in the month of the preceding December—that is, when he was yet uncertain, whether he would be permitted to have a Catholic Prieſt, to aſſiſt him in his laſt trial. All who have read this piece, at once ſo intereſting and ſo worthy of a Chriſtian King, will readily judge of the profound impreſſion which it muſt have made upon me. But what will without doubt aſtoniſh them, the King had the fortitude to read it himſelf and even to read it twice over. His voice was firm and there appeared no alteration in his face, till he came to mention names that were dear to him. Then all his tenderneſs awoke.—He was obliged to pauſe awhile and give vent to his tears.—But when mention was only made of himſelf and his misfortunes, he ſeemed no more moved than in general other men are when they hear of the misfortunes of a ſtranger.

Having finiſhed reading the Will, and the Royal family not coming down, the King anxiouſly inquired concerning his Clergy and the preſent ſtate of the Church of France.—

* See Note E.

In ſpite of the rigor of his confinement he had learned ſomething. He knew in general that the French Eccleſiaſtics, obliged to leave their country, had been received in London, but he was entirely ignorant of the particular details. The little information which lay within the ſphere of my duty to give him, appeared to make upon him the moſt profound impreſſion, and in lamenting the wretchedneſs of the French Clergy, he did not ceaſe to do homage to the generoſity of the people of England, who had ſo generouſly afforded them an aſylum. Not confining himſelf however to general queſtions, but entering into particulars which I thought aſtoniſhing, he wiſhed to know what had become of many Eccleſiaſtics in whoſe fortune he ſeemed to take a peculiar intereſt. The Cardinal de Rochefoucault and the Biſhop of Clermont appeared above all to arreſt his attention, but his ſolicitude ſtill increaſed on hearing the name of the Archbiſhop of Paris. He aſked me where he was, what he was doing, and if I had any means of correſponding with him. "Let him know (ſays the king) that I die in his communion, and that I have never acknowledged any other Paſtor than him. Alas! I am afraid that he feels a little offended, that I have not anſwered his laſt letter. I was indeed ſtill at the Thuilleries, but truly I was ſo much hurried by paſſing events, that I could not find time. Nevertheleſs, he will forgive me, I am ſure, ſince he is ſo good!"

The Abbé de Floirac alſo ſhared his affectionate inquiries. The King had never ſeen him but he was acquainted with the ſervices which this reſpectable Eccleſiaſtic had rendered the dioceſe of Paris, in the moſt portentous times. He aſked me what was become of him, and upon my anſwering that he had the good fortune to eſcape, the King ſpoke of

him in terms which indicated the high value which he attached to his preſervation, and the eſteem which he entertained for his virtues. I do not recollect by what accident the converſation turned upon the Duke of Orleans. The King appeared to me to be acquainted with his artifices and with the ſhameful part which he played in the Convention. But he ſpoke of him without a ſhadow of aſperity, and with more pity than anger. "What have I done to my couſin (ſaid he) that he ſhould perſecute me in this manner? But why ſhould I wiſh him any harm? Ah! he is much more to be pitied than myſelf! My ſituation is melancholy, without doubt; but were it much more ſo, it is very certain that I would not exchange with him."

This intereſting converſation was here interupted by one of the Commiſſaries, who came to inform the King that his family were come down, and that he was permitted to ſee them. At this intelligence, he ſeemed very much moved and ſet off to meet them with great anxiety. The interview took place (as fat as I can judge, for I was not there,) in a ſmall room, ſeparated only by a glaſs door from that of the Commiſſaries, ſo that they could ſee and hear every thing. For myſelf, though ſhut up in the cloſet where the King had left me, I eaſily diſtinguiſhed the voices and in ſpite of myſelf I was witneſs to a ſcene the moſt affecting that I had ever experienced. No, my pen is too feeble to deſcribe this heart-rending interview. During nearly a quarter of an hour, not one word was articulated. It was not merely tears and ſobs, but piercing cries, which might have been heard even beyond the precincts of the [redacted]. The King, the Queen, the Dauphin, Madam Elizabeth and the Royal Princeſs, all lamented together at once—and their voices

were confounded. At length their tears ceased from inability any longer to flow them. They began to speak in whispers and with tolerable composure. The conversation lasted about an hour, and the King took leave of his family, giving them hopes of seeing him again next day.

He returned immediately to me, but in a state of inquietude and agitation which exhibited a soul penetrated with grief. "Ah! sir, (said he, throwing himself upon a chair,) what an interview I have just had! Why should I be permitted to love so tenderly, and to be so tenderly beloved! But it is over, and let us forget all other things, for the one thing necessary. That alone is worthy at this moment of concentrating all my affections and all my thoughts." He continued thus to talk to me, in terms which displayed altogether his sensibility and his courage, when Clery came and asked him if he pleased to take supper. The King hesitated a moment, but on reflection he accepted the offer. This repast did not last more than five minutes. Returning to his closet, he proposed to me to sup likewise. I had little inclination, but lest I should disoblige him, I thought it my duty to obey, or at least appear to do so.

An idea had for a long time been impressed upon my mind, and now occupied me more strongly since my conference with the King. This was to procure for him at any price, the Holy Sacrament, of which he had been so long deprived. I could have procured it secretly, as we were obliged to do for all the faithful, who were detained among us. But the critical search which it was necessary to undergo in entering the Temple, and the profanation which would have been the infallible consequence, were more than sufficient reasons to prevent my taking this step. No other resource

remained for me in theſe circumſtances, but to ſay Maſs in the chamber of the King, if I could find means to do it. I made him the propoſal, but he appeared at firſt alarmed at it. Nevertheleſs, as he appreciated the value of this grace, as alſo he even ardently deſired it, and as all his objections aroſe from an apprehenſion of a diſaſtrous reſult to myſelf; I begged him to give me his full conſent, on my promiſing that I would act with prudence and diſcretion. At length he conſented. "Go then, ſir, (ſaid he) but I very much fear, that you will not ſuceed; for I know the men with whom you have to do. They grant nothing, which they have the power to refuſe."

Fortified with this permiſſion, I requeſted to be conducted to the hall of the Council, and there I ſubſtantiated my demand in the name of the King. This propoſition, for which the Commiſſaries of the Tower were not prepared, diſconcerted them very much, and they ſought different pretexts to elude the requeſt. "Where (ſaid they) find a Prieſt at this late hour?—and even if one were found, how procure the neceſſary ornaments?" "The Prieſt is already at hand (I anſwered) for here am I; and with reſpect to the ornaments, the neareſt Church will furniſh them: for the reſt, my requeſt is a juſt one, and it would be to violate your own principles to refuſe it." A Commiſſary immediately replied, and although in gentle terms, gave me to underſtand that my requeſt might be only a ſnare, and that under pretext of giving the Sacrament to the King, I might poiſon him. "Hiſtory (added he) furniſhes us with ſufficient examples to engage us to be circumſpect." I contented myſelf with regarding him with earneſtneſs and with telling him—"the critical ſearch to which I have ſubmitt-

ed myſelf in coming hither, ought to make you ſenſible that I carry no poiſon about me. If, however, any ſhould be found tomorrow, I muſt have received it of you, ſince all that is neceſſary for me to ſay Maſs will paſs through your hands. He would have rejoined, but his brethern impoſed ſilence upon him: and as a final ſubterfuge, they told me that the Council not being complete, they could undertake nothing; adding, however, that they would aſſemble the abſent members, and give me the reſult of their deliberation.

A quarter of an hour paſſed in convoking the abſent members and in deliberating. I was then introduced once more, and the Preſident addreſſed me in this manner—"Citizen, Miniſter of Religion, the Council has taken into conſideration the demand which you have made in the name of Louis Capet, and has reſolved that his requeſt, being conformable to the laws, which declare that every kind of worſhip is free, ſhall be granted. We however annex two conditions to it. The firſt is, that you ſhall immediately draw up a petition ſignifying your deſire and ſigned with your name—the ſecond, that the religious exerciſes which you are to perform, ſhall be finiſhed tomorrow at ſeven o'clock *at the lateſt*; becauſe preciſely at eight *Louis Capet will ſet off for the place of execution.* Theſe laſt words were delivered, like all the reſt, with an indifference which characterized an atrocious ſoul, in the habit of contemplating the blackeſt of crimes without remorſe. I, however, drew up my requeſt in writing, and left it upon the deſk. I was then immediately reconducted back to the King, who was waiting with a ſort of uneaſineſs the iſſue of this negociation. But the happy reſult which I was enabled to explain to him, though

I ſuppreſſed all the circumſtances, appeared to afford him the moſt ſenſible pleaſure.

It was now paſt ten o'clock, and I ſtill remained ſhut up with the King till the night was far advanced, but ſeeing he was fatigued, I propoſed to him to take a little repoſe. He conſented to it, with his uſual condeſcenſion, and he invited me to do the ſame—I accordingly retired, agreeably to his orders, into a little room occupied by Clery. This chamber was ſeparated from that of the King only by a partition; and while I abandoned myſelf to the moſt diſtreſſing reflections, I heard this Prince give his orders with great tranquility for the morrow, go to bed afterwards and ſleep profoundly.

At five o'clock he roſe, and dreſſed himſelf as uſual. Soon afterward he ſent for me, and converſed with me more than an hour, in the cloſet, where he had received me the evening before. On leaving the cloſet, I found an Altar, completely arranged in the King's chamber. The commiſſaries had exactly performed all that I had requeſted of them, and had even done more than was ſtrictly neceſſary. The King heard Maſs kneeling on the floor, there being no cuſhion nor any other accommodation. He received the Holy Sacrament. I then left him for ſome time to finiſh his prayers. Soon after this, he ſent for me again, and I found him ſitting by his ſtove, hardly able to warm himſelf. "My God (ſaid he) how happy I am to have preſerved my principles! Without them where ſhould I be now! But with them, death ought to be welcome to me! Yes, there is above, an incorruptible judge, who will render me the juſtice which men have refuſed me here below."

The miniſterial functions which I had exerciſed with this Prince, permit me only to give the outlines of the various converſations, which we had together during the laſt ſixteen hours of his life. But from the little I have ſaid, one may aſcertain what I might have added, if I were permitted to give a more copious detail.

The day now began to appear, and they were already beating the *General* in the different ſections of Paris. This extraordinary movement was very diſtinctly heard in the Tower, and I muſt acknowledge that it chilled the blood in my veins. But the King more calm than myſelf, after liſtening awhile, ſaid without emotion, "*It is probably the national guard which they are beginning to aſſemble.*" Soon afterward, detachments of cavalry entered the Court of the Temple, and we could already diſtinguiſh the voices of the officers and the trampling of the horſes' feet. The King remarked it and ſaid with the ſame coolneſs—"*They appear to be approaching.*"

He had promiſed the Queen, in taking leave of her the evening before, that he would ſee her again the next day, and liſtening only to the ſuggeſtions of his heart, he wiſhed to keep his word. But I begged him with great earneſtneſs not to put her to a trial, which ſhe had not ſtrength to undergo. He pauſed a moment, and with an expreſſion of the moſt profound grief, he ſaid, "*your are right ſir, it would be a death-ſtroke to her.* It is better that I ſhould forego this ſad conſolation, and let her live in hopes ſome moments longer."

From ſeven to eight o'clock, they came under different pretexts, knocking at the door of the cloſet, in which I was ſhut up with the King; and I trembled each time, leſt it

ſhould be the laſt. But the King with more firmneſs than I poſſeſſed, roſe without emotion, and with great tranquility anſwered the different perſons, who thus interrupted him. I know not who they were, but among them was certainly one of the greateſt monſters which the Revolution has produced; for I heard him very diſtinctly ſay to this Prince in a tone of irony (I do not know why) "O! O! all that was well enough, while you were a King, *but you are no longer one.*"

The King did not anſwer a word, but returning to me, he juſt ſaid, raiſing his ſhoulders, "*See how theſe people treat me! but I muſt learn to ſuffer every thing.*" At another time, after having anſwered one of the commiſſaries who came to diſturb him, he returned to the cloſet and ſaid ſmiling, "Theſe folks ſpy daggers and poiſon every where, and are afraid that I ſhall put an end to my own life. Alas! they little know me—to kill myſelf would be a [illegible] indeed! No—ſince death is neceſſary, I know how to die."

At length they knocked at the door for the laſt time, to introduce Santerre and his attendants. The King opened the door as uſual, and they informed him (I could not hear the particular expreſſions,) that he muſt now ſet off for the place of execution. "*I have a little buſineſs in hand,* (ſaid he to them, with an air of ſome authority) *wait a few minutes and I ſhall be at your ſervice.*" In ſaying theſe words, he ſhut the door, and came and threw himſelf at my feet. "*All is over ſir,* (ſaid he) *give me your laſt bleſſing, and pray God that he will ſupport me to the end.*" He then roſe, and going out of the cloſet, he advanced toward the party who were in the middle of the bed chamber. Their faces exhib-

ited no marks of assurance. They were however, all cover-ed, and the King perceiving it, asked for his own hat.—While Clery bathed in tears, ran to fetch it—"Is there a-mong you (said the King,) any member of the Commune? I charge him with this writing, to be deposited there. It was his Will, and one of the attendants took it from the hand of the King.* He continued, "I recommend also to the Commune, Clery, my valet de Chambre, whose services merit my highest approbation. They will, I trust, take care to give him my watch and all my effects, as well those which I have here, as those which are deposited at the Commune. I desire likewise that in reward for his attachment to me, he will be permitted to transfer his services to the Queen—*my wife*"—the King it is to observed, used both of these appellations. Nobody answering,—"*Let us proceed*" said the King firmly. At these words, the party filed off. The King crossed the first court (formerly the garden) on foot. He turned his eyes once or twice toward the Tower, as if to bid farewell to all that he had dear in this world, and every movement which he made displayed his fortitude and his courage. At the entrance of the second court appeared a hackney coach. Two *gendarmes* guarded the door. The King approaching, one of them got in first and placed himself upon the front seat. The King got in afterward, and placed me beside him on the back seat. The other *gendarme* jumped in last and shut the door. It has been confidently said that one of these two men was a priest in disguise. I hope for the honor of the priesthood, that this story is fabulous.† We are also assured that they had orders to assassinate the King, should there be the small-

* See Note F. † See Note G.

eſt movement among the people. But it ſeemed to me that unleſs they were furniſhed with other arms than thoſe which appeared, it would have been very difficult to execute their deſign, for we ſaw nothing but their muſkets, of which it was impoſſible to make any uſe.

Beſides, this inſurrection which was apprehended was altogether chimerical. A great number of perſons devoted to the King, had reſolved to reſcue him by main force from his executioners, or at leaſt to undertake it at all events. Two of the principal actors in this intended ſcene, young men of good reputation, came to give me notice of it the evening before, and I muſt acknowledge that without indulging great hopes, I nevertheleſs flattered myſelf even to the foot of the ſcaffold. I have ſince learnt, that the orders for his tragical morning had been conceived with ſo much art and executed with ſo much preciſion, that out of between four and five hundred perſons who had devoted themſelves to ſave their Prince, twenty five only had been known to reach the ſcene of action. The reſt, in conſequence of meaſures taken at day-break in all the ſtreets of Paris, were not able even to go out of their houſes.

To return from this digreſſion, the King, finding himſelf under great conſtraint in the carriage, where he could neither ſpeak to me nor hear me ſpeak, except before witneſſes, reſolved to be ſilent. I immediately preſented him my Breviary, the only book which I had with me, and he ſeemed to accept it with pleaſure. He deſired me to point out the pſalms which more particularly ſuited his ſituation, and we recited them alternately together. The gendarmes without ſaying a word, ſeemed at once delighted and confounded at the tranquil piety of a Monarch, whom they had never

before seen so near. The procession lasted two hours. All the streets were lined with many ranks of Citizens, some armed with pikes and others with muskets; besides this the Coach itself was surrounded by a formidable body of troops, and without doubt composed of the dregs of Paris. As a final measure of precaution, they had placed before the horses, a great number of drums, with a view to drown the cries which might be made in favor of the King. But how could any be heard? Nobody appeared either at the doors or windows, neither were any persons in the street but armed Citizens; that is, Citizens who perhaps from weakness concurred in a crime which perhaps they detested in their hearts.

The carriage at length arrived in the greatest silence at the place of Louis XV. and stopped in the middle of a large vacant space, which had been left round the scaffold. This space was surrounded with cannon, and beyond that, as far as the sight could extend, the perspective was filled with a multitude in arms. As soon as the King perceived that the carriage had stopped, he turned to me and said softly "*we are now arrived, if I am not mistaken.*" My silence assented. One of the executioners instantly came and opened the door, and the gendarmes were about getting out, but the King stopped them and putting his hand upon my knee, said in a tone of authority "sirs, I recommend this Gentleman to your attention. Take care that after my death he receive no insult—*I charge you to look to it.*" These two men not answering, the King was going to speak with still more emphasis, but one of them interrupting him, answered "*Yes, yes, we will take care of him, leave it to us.*" I ought to add that these words were said in a tone of voice

which would have chilled me, if at that moment it had been poſſible to have any concern for my own ſafety.

As ſoon as the King had alighted from the carriage, three executioners got round him and wiſhed to take off his clothes, but he puſhed them away with indignation, and undreſſed himſelf. He unbuttoned his collar, and put his ſhirt in order with his own hands; the executioners whom the indignant countenance of the King had for a moment diſconcerted, ſoon recovered their audacity. They got round him again and were going to ſeize his hands. "*What is your intention?*" ſaid the Prince to them, at the ſame time drawing away his hands impatiently—"*To bind you,*" anſwered one of the executioners—"*To bind me!* (replied the King with an air of indignation) *No, I will never conſent to it. Do what you are commanded, but you ſhall not bind me—ſo, give over this ſcheme.*" The executioners however ſtill inſiſted upon it. They raiſed their voices, and ſeemed deſirous of calling for help to bind him by main force. This perhaps was the moſt dreadful moment of this melancholy day. One minute more, and the beſt of Kings would have received, before the eyes of his rebellious ſubjects, an outrage a thouſand times more inſupportable than death, from the violence with which he was about to be treated. He appeared to fear it himſelf, and turning round, he looked at me attentively as if to aſk my advice. Alas! it was impoſſible for me to give him any, and at firſt I kept ſilence—but as he continued to look at me—I ſaid to him with tears, "Sire, in this new outrage, I can only diſcover the laſt trait of reſemblance, between your Majeſty and the God who will ſoon be your reward." At theſe words he lifted up his eyes to heaven with an expreſſion of agony, which I

cannot describe. "*Assuredly*, (he answered) *nothing less than his example could persuade me to submit to so barbarous an insult*"—and then immediately turning to the executioners—"*Do what you please* (said he) *I will drink of the cup to the very dregs.*"

The steps which led up to the scaffold were narrow and very difficult to ascend. The King was obliged to lean upon my arm, and from the pain which he seemed to feel, I was for a moment afraid that his courage would forsake him. But what was my astonishment, when after reaching the last step, to see him bound away from me—cross with a firm pace the whole length of the scaffold—impose silence by a single look upon fifteen or twenty drummers who were placed over against him—and with a voice loud enough to be heard at the Pont Tournant, distinctly pronounce these never to be forgotten words.

"I die innocent of all the crimes which have been imputed to me. I forgive the authors of my death—and I pray God that the blood which you are about to shed, may never be visited in judgment upon France."*

He was going to continue, when a man on horseback and in a national uniform,† rushing suddenly sword in hand among the drummers, obliged them to beat. Several voices were heard at the same time encouraging the executioners. They appeared to receive new animation, and rudely seizing the most virtuous of Kings, they dragged him under the axe of the guillotine, which immediately struck off his head. All this was the affair of a few moments.‡

* See Note H. † See Note I.

‡ See Note K.

The youngeſt of the executioners (who did not appear to be above eighteen years of age) inſtantly laid hold of the head, and ſhewing it to the people as he went round the ſcaffold, he accompanied this horrid ceremony with the moſt ſavage exclamations, and the moſt indecent geſticulations.

A ſullen ſilence reigned at firſt. Soon, however, ſome cries of "*Long live the Republic*," began to be heard. By degrees voices multiplied, and in leſs than ten minutes (whether from blind rage or cowardly weakneſs,) this cry repeated a thouſand times became the ſhout of the multitude, and all hats were in the air.

FINIS.

NOTES.

NOTE A.

CHRISTIAN William Lamoignon De Malesherbes was the son of the Chancellor of France. He was born at Paris, 16th December, 1721, and brought up to the bar. He gradually rose to the office of first president of the court of Aides, 1750, and for 25 years was thus zealously engaged in the service of his country, in supporting and invigorating the industry of her inhabitants. After he had retired from this laborious duty to his estate, he was recalled in 1775, by Louis 16th, to become the minister of the interior, and in this high situation he conducted himself with the humanity and attention of a great and good man. The prisons were visited, and no longer contained any but criminals who had violated the law. Various employments were introduced to recommend habits of industry, and the apartments were rendered more commodious for the unfortunate captives. The retirement of Turgot from office was attended by that of his friend Malesherbes, who now employed himself in travelling under an assumed name and in a plain dress, over France, Switzerland and Holland, and in examining the various manufactures, curiosities and arts, of each province. He hailed the Revolution as the forerunner of blessings to France, but soon saw his hopes vanish. Yet, while others fled from the field of danger, he boldly appeared before the Convention, and actuated by gratitude and hu-

manity, he no sooner saw his sovereign dragged as a criminal before his subjects, than he demanded the privilege and the honor of being his defender. The heroic conduct of this venerable man, while it drew admiration from all, had no effect on the bloody Convention. His appeals in favor of Louis and of virtue, were of no avail, and he was the first to announce to the unfortunate Monarch the ill success of his defence. So much goodness, it might have been expected, ought to have met respect among a civilized nation, but it proved otherwise. No sooner was his daughter, accused of treason and hurried to prison, than the aged father requested he might accompany his beloved child. The request was granted, and in a few days, alas! he appeared with her and her child before the Revolutionary Tribunal, and with her and her innocent child, he ascended the scaffold. These illustrious victims suffered 22d April, 1793. He was author of a Treatise on Rural Economy—Thoughts and Maxims—and two Memoirs on the civil state of the Protestants.—*Lempriere's Universal Biography.*

NOTE B.

THIS Palace is so called, because built in a place where tiles were formerly made. The Palace of the Thuilleries was begun in 1554, by order of Catharine of Medicis, after the designs, and under the conduct of Philip de L'Orme. Henry 4th, finished it in 1600. Lewis 14th, after designs of Le Vau, and under the conduct of Francis d'Orbat, carried it to perfection, and gave it all the beauty that is remarked in its magnificent apartments. It is composed of five pavillions, and four bodies of lodging rooms, in which

the architecture is admired, though differently treated. The ſculpture is by the principal maſters, and the whole is built upon a right line about 170 fathoms long.

There were at firſt only three pavillions, and the two bodies of lodgings betwixt them. The reſt were erected under the reign of Henry 4th. The large pavillion in the middle, is adorned with columns of marble, on the ſide of the carouſal. Thoſe on the ſide of the garden are of ſtone only. There is one, among others, which the connoiſſeurs much admire. In the inſide of the palace are many things to be obſerved. After aſcending the ſtair caſe, which is ingenioufly contrived, we enter into the King's great apartment. Many famous painters worked there in emulation of one another, under the conduct of Le Brun. In the ceiling of the guard room are repreſented the march of an army, a battle, a triumph and a ſacrifice, and in the midſt, Fame, with many other figures. The ceiling of the antichamber repreſents the hours of the day and the night, by different allegorical figures. The fable of Procris, the ſtatue of Memnon, Clitia, and the Sun going to extinguiſh himſelf in the ſea, are taken from the Metamorphoſes of Ovid. The figures of ſculpture, which ſupport the ſtucco chimney in the King's great chamber, are by Girardon; and the others by Lewis Lerambert. The ceiling, which is admired in the gallery of the Ambaſſadors, was copied after that of the Farneſian gallery at Rome, painted by Annibal Caracci. But the changes that were [illegible] made, when Louis 15th came to reſide in this palace, make it not eaſy to be diſtinguiſhed at preſent. The landſcapes, in the apartments on the garden ſide, are by Franciſqui, and the others by Noel Coypel.

The Queen's apartment was painted by Norè. The Queen is repreſented under the form of Minerva; but in different employments. The place where balls and comedies were exhibited before the court, is called the *ſalle des Machines*. This theatre is one of the fineſt things one finds in the palace of the Thuilleries, and perhaps the moſt remarkable monument that can be ſeen of its kind that of Parma alone excepted. The grandeur, the diſpoſition and the riches of it are all of ſurpriſing beauty. It may contain eight thouſand perſons, and all be commodiouſly placed. Of courſe, it is three times as large as the largeſt of our Engliſh theatres.—*Lady's Magazine for* 1789.

The Thuilleries is ſituated at right angles with the Louver which is in front of the River Seine. The former has a parade before it, where the Swiſs guards were maſſacred on the 10th of Auguſt, 1792, in their defence of the Royal Family. Behind is the place of Louis 15th, [redacted] the late King was guillotined.—*Note by the Tranſlator.*

NOTE C.

AS this Priſon is entitled to particular notice from its having been the laſt reſidence of the Royal Family of France —and the ſcene of moſt of their afflictions, we ſubjoin the following account. "The little Tower, in which the King was at firſt confined, is contiguous to the great Tower, without any interior communication, and forms a long ſquare flanked by two turrets. In one of theſe there is a ſmall ſtair caſe, which leads from the firſt ſtory to a gallery, upon the platform. In the other are cloſets, which correſpond with each ſtory of the Tower. The body of the

building contains four ſtories. The firſt is compoſed of an anti-chamber, a dining hall, and a cloſet made in the turret, in which there was a library of from twelve to fifteen hundred volumes. The ſecond ſtory is divided nearly in the ſame manner. The largeſt room ſerved for a bedchamber for the Queen and the Dauphin. The ſecond which is ſeparated from the firſt, by a little dark anti-chamber, was occupied by the Princeſs Royal and Princeſs Elizabeth. It was neceſſary to croſs this chamber to go into the cloſet of the turret, and this turret ſerved for a general cloſet to the whole edifice. It was equally common for the Royal Family, the Municipal Officers and the Soldiery. The King lived in the third ſtory and ſlept in the great chamber. The cloſet in the turret ſerved him for a reading room. On one ſide is a kitchen, ſeparated from the King's chamber by a little dark room. The fourth ſtory was ſhut up. There are on the ground floor kitchens of which no uſe was made."—*Clery's Journal.*

Here the King remained till after the affair of the 10th of Auguſt, when he was transferred to the great Tower.

"The great Tower is about one hundred and fifty feet high, and forms four ſtories which are vaulted, and ſupported in the middle by a large pillar from top to bottom. The inſide is about thirty feet ſquare. The ſecond and third ſtories, deſtined for the Royal Family, being like the reſt originally one large room, were divided into four chambers by board partitions. The ground floor was occupied by the Municipality—the firſt floor ſerved as a corps de garde, and the King was lodged in the ſecond. The firſt room of his apartment was an anti-chamber, where three doors ſeparately led to three other rooms. Fronting the door of entrance

was the King's bedchamber, where alſo lay the Dauphin. The dining hall was on the left and ſeparated from the anti-chamber by a glazed partition. There was a chimney in the King's chamber, and a large ſtove in the anti-chamber warmed the other rooms. Each of theſe chambers was lighted by a caſement, but they had placed outſide iron bars and dead lights, which prevented a free circulation of air; the embraſures of the windows were nine feet thick. The great Tower communicates, each ſtory, with four turrets placed upon the angles. In one of theſe turrets is the ſtair caſe which leads quite up to the battlements. They had placed there ſeven wickets at equal diſtances. From this ſtair caſe one can enter each ſtory by paſſing through two doors. The firſt is of oak wood, very thick and filled with nails, the ſecond of iron. Another turret opened into the King's chamber, and formed a cloſet. They had contrived a general cloſet in the third. The fourth contained the fuel —as alſo in the day time the beds which the Municipal Officers on duty uſed at night. Theſe four apartments of the King had a falſe cloth ceiling, and the partitions were papered. The figures on the paper of the anti-chamber repreſented the inſide of a priſon, and on the pannels they had printed in large characters—*the declaration of the rights of man*, ſurrounded with a tri-colored border. A cheſt of drawers, a little deſk, four wrought chairs, an eaſy chair, ſome ſtraw chairs, a table, a glaſs over the chimney, and a bed of green damaſk were the whole furniture—and this as well as the furniture of the other room had been brought from the Thuilleries. The King's bed had been that of the Captain of the guard of the Count d'Artois. The Queen lodged in the third ſtory, which was arranged in a manner

similar to the Kings. The fourth story was unoccupied. A gallery runs along the inside of the battlements and served sometimes for a walk. They had placed lattices between the battlements, to prevent the Royal Family from seeing or being seen."——*Clery's Journal.*

D

THIS Decree may be seen in the Journal of Clery, page 58 and 59. Edition of Quebec, 1798.

Note by the Editor.

E

THE Will of Louis XVI. may be seen at length in the Journal of Clery, page 49. Edition of Quebec, 1798.

Note by the Editor.

F

JACQUES ROUX, in his Report to the Cummune, the very day of the King's death, boasted to have answered him upon this occasion. *"We are not come to receive your commissions, but to conduct you to the Scaffold."* I did not hear this atrocious speech, but the man who could boast of it, was very capable of saying it.—*Note of the Author.*

Clery declares in his Journal that the above words were absolutely uttered by Jacques Roux—but probably M. Edgeworth might have been prevented by his extreme anxiety (natural to a moment so afflicting,) from hearing them.

Note by the Editor.

G

THIS fact is, however, substantiated by authority which we have already cited. *Note by the Translator.*

H

THESE laſt words have been variouſly repeated in the different Journals. I give them as they then appeared to me to be uttered, and as my memory has retained them ever ſince. *Note by the Author.*

I

IT is generally believed that this ferocious wretch was Santerre. It is a miſtake—Santerre even ſhed tears upon this occaſion. The time is not yet come when it will be proper to announce the name of the monſter who prevented Louis from giving the people of Paris the laſt pledge of his regard.

Hiſtory of the Conſpiracy of the Duke of Orleans.

K

At the inſtant that the axe of the Guillotine deprived the Monarch of life, M. Edgeworth had the courage to exclaim "Child of St. Louis aſcend to heaven!"

It may be proper in this place to quote the following remarks, contained in a note to the Funeral Sermon delivered in honor of M. Edgeworth.

"When M. Edgeworth came down from the ſcaffold, his clothes were ſtained with blood. The troops and the populace made way for him by a ſpontaneous movement. He has ſince related that he arrived at the houſe of M. De Malesherbes, in a ſtate of ſtupor, and without being able to explain how he could ſo eaſily effect his eſcape."

Note by the Editor.

FINIS.